



News Release

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WA Notify adds new feature: Exposure notifications for at-home COVID-19 test results

OLYMPIA – Washington’s exposure notification app is launching a new feature that will allow those who test positive for COVID-19 with an at-home test to anonymously notify others of a potential exposure. The new feature increases the number of people who may benefit from WA Notify’s exposure notifications because it increases the number of tests being used to notify others.

Since the inception, those who receive a positive test result from a laboratory automatically receive verification codes for positive tests reported to DOH. Now, with this new feature, those who take a home test can get a verification code too, if they test positive.

Verification codes can be requested by following [simple instructions](#) within the WA Notify app. For iPhone users, Exposure Notifications is found within Settings. They will select the option to share a COVID-19 diagnosis and indicate they did not get a code. Android users should open the WA Notify app, select to share a test result and that they need a code. Both applications will ask for the user’s phone number and positive test date, and then a code will be sent to them. No personal or location information is shared. Once a user enters their verification code, other WA Notify users who have been near them within the last 14 days can be anonymously alerted and take appropriate action.

Users should then contact the DOH COVID-19 hotline at 1-800-525-0127, then press #, to report the positive result from an over-the-counter test.

“Slowing the spread of COVID-19 is dependent upon early notification to close contacts of everyone who tests positive for the virus,” said Tao Kwan-Gett, MD, Washington State Chief

Science Officer. “By including the option to request verification codes for positive at-home tests, more individuals can be notified earlier so they can take the steps to protect themselves and others.”

[WA Notify](#) is a free exposure notification tool that runs in the background on smartphones that have enabled the app to alert users they may have been exposed to COVID-19. It works without sharing any personal information including where or when the exposure occurred. When two phones using WA Notify are near each other, they exchange random, anonymous codes using Bluetooth. If a WA Notify user later tests positive for COVID-19, and adds their verification code into the app, the phone will send out an anonymous exposure notification to the phones of other WA Notify users they were near who may have been exposed. Users may then take necessary steps, like testing and quarantining, to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

Since DOH launched the app in November 2020, over 2.75 million individuals have enabled the service on the phone – accounting for almost 45% of all smartphone users in the state. WA Notify can be enabled in iPhone settings (iPhone 5s or newer using iOS 12.5 or higher) or downloaded as an app from the Google Play Store for Android phones. Users can opt out at any time. WA Notify is available in more than 30 languages so as many Washington residents as possible can access this tool.

Visit the [WA Notify page](#) for more information on how the exposure tool works and how to enable the service on your phone. Learn more about COVID-19 on the [DOH coronavirus page](#).

The [DOH website](#) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. [Find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#). Sign up for the DOH blog, [Public Health Connection](#).

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